prohibitive. Three miles of this channel have however been excavated at a cost of about 1,28,000 Rs. An expenditure of over Rs. 30 and half lakhs has been incurred on the scheme up to close of the last Malabar year. As estimated by the D. P. W. the scheme finally sanctioned is calculated to add to the supply of water to 25,550 acres of wet lands already under river irrigation and ensure a regular supply to 8,120 acres under rainfed lands and 15,887 acres of uncultivated Poramboke and other dry lands, or in all benefit 49,557 acres. The Chief Engineer expects that the Kodayar waters will be to some extent supplied to the left bank channel system during the next irrigation season and hopes to be able to fully complete the dam within a further period of 18 months.

The necessity for opening new roads and improving communications in the Quilon and Northern Divisions, has been pressed on the attention of Government and will receive due consideration.

The Tinnevelly-Quilon extension of the South Indian Railway is now completed. Owing unfortunately however to the slips that occurred during the recent heavy rains of the South West monsoon, through communication has not yet been established. The line from Quilon to Punaloor was opened for traffic on the 1st of June last. It is hoped that the whole line will be opened before January 1905. According to the latest revised, estimate received the total cost for the construction of the Travancore Branch of the line is Rs. 157,71,766. The total amount of interest paid by the State up to date is Rs. 6,66,256, the guaranteed rate being 3½ per cent. The Railway runs over difficult country and the work done on the Ghat section especially deserves praise, considering the comparatively short period in which it has been completed.

With the advent of the Railway, the necessity for steam communication along the backwaters has become more pressing. Messers Walli Bhai Khader Bhai & Co. have begun to run their boats between Cochin and Quilon. Applications have been received from them as well as from other firms for help to establish a regular steam boat service. The maintenance of a uniform depth of water in the canals and the regulation of traffic are under consideration.

17. **Anchel.** There are 150 Anchel offices and 179 letter boxes throughout the State. Nearly 50 lakhs of covers, official and private, passed through the Anchel office during the past year. The earnings including the postage chargeable on official covers amounted to Rs. 3,68,853 against an expenditure of Rs. 1,00,307. It is satisfactory to note that the Anchel Hundi system is becoming more popular. A small transit-boat service is maintained in connection with this Department mainly for the carriage of the heavy mails. It will be abolished when a regular steam-boat service is established.

18. **Separate Revenue.** The receipts from separate revenue during the past year amounted to Rs. 49 34,092 and the charges to Rs. 4,89,837, leaving a net revenue of Rs. 44,44,165 or Rs. 2,07,232 more than in the previous year.

19. **Salt.** The total quantity of home-made, Bombay and Tinnevelly salt available for issue was 9,97,422 maunds. The sales were 7,49,141 maunds showing an increase of 41,553 maunds. The revenue was Rs. 19,28,651 showing a decrease of Rs. 1,13,943 due to the reduction in the selling price from Rs. 3 to 2½ per maund. There are 68 Bankshalls.

Home-made salt. There are 3 allams, viz, those at Thamarakulam, Rajakamangalam and Variyur. The out-turn from these three allams was 2,57,201½ maunds in 1079.

A Salt Conference was held and resolutions were passed as under:—

(1) That the State should eventually be made independent of foreign salt, by encouraging home manufacture.

(2) That the Colachel allam be resuscitated and worked.

(3) That the distribution of salt to the consumers be eventually left to private enterprise.

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